

Windham VT Selectboard Meeting Minutes  
May 18, 2020 Regular Meeting

Present via Zoom web conference:

Maureen Bell, Selectwoman	Peter Chamberlain, Selectman
Kord Scott, Selectman	Mike McLaine, Town Clerk
Vance Bell, Energy Committee, Social Media	Joyce Cumming, Clerk
Louise Johnson, Meeting House Committee	Tom Johnson, Energy Committee
Kathy Jungermann, Auditor	Kathy Scott, Treasurer
Gail Wyman, Asst. Treasurer	Paul Wyman, Delinquent Tax Collector

**Call to order**

The meeting was called to order at 5:30 p.m.

**Additions to Agenda/Announcements/Reminder**

- Maureen noted that the School Budget Vote is scheduled for June 10, 2020; details are being worked out.
- The Route 11 paving project has begun again; ditching is currently underway in Andover.
- The Transfer Station announced an electronics collection event to be held May 30<sup>th</sup> at Flood Brook School.

**Approve minutes of May 4, 2020 Regular Selectboard Meeting**

Motion: To approve the May 4, 2020 Regular Selectboard Meeting minutes as submitted—moved by Maureen—all in favor.

**Public Comment**

There were no comments from the public.

**Correspondence**

Correspondence included the access permit submitted by John Pozzi which was addressed at the May 4 meeting.

Maureen mentioned a letter received from the State about the appointment of the Forest Fire Warden and Deputy Forest Fire Warden. These positions are handled similarly to that of the Health Officer—State makes the appointment based on recommendations from the Town. Appointment sheets need to be completed for Rick Weitzel as Forest Fire Warden and Ralph Wyman as Deputy Forest Fire Warden, signed by Rick and Ralph respectively, and signed by the members of the Selectboard. Maureen will distribute the appointment forms to the other members as a PDF for electronic signatures.

**New Business:**

**Sanitizing the Town Offices**

Maureen referenced a conversation with Kathy Scott about sanitizing the Town Offices. While Maureen was in agreement, she noted that additional information would be needed, i.e., frequency, chemicals, cost, schedule, etc. Paul suggested a cleaning regimen similar to that at the school including wiping down all hard surfaces frequently touched such as desktops and countertops, door handles, sinks, toilets, etc. with a COVID sanitizer. As for frequency, Paul suggested weekly cleaning if a lot of people are using the offices. Mike reported half a dozen visitors on average per week not including Town employees, but deferred to Paul's judgment re: frequency.

Paul suggested sanitizing every two weeks at a minimum. Cost is \$40 per cleaning. Maureen and Kord expressed a preference for weekly sanitizing.

Kord brought up the Meeting House and possible need for a similar cleaning regimen there. Maureen noted that the Meeting House is not being used on a formal basis (exercise classes and library are cancelled) though she noted that some residents are stopping in for brief visits such as egg drop-off/pick-up. Louise noted that the Meeting House Committee hired Emily Forbes for cleaning the facility; she is not currently cleaning since formal use is discontinued. Louise offered to check with Emily to see if she can sanitize.

Peter resumed discussion on the Town offices and agreed with weekly sanitizing there for the present time. He suggested re-visiting the topic later if necessary. Maureen asked Paul about the schedule; Paul plans to clean on Sunday when no one is present.

Motion: To hire Paul Wyman to clean and sanitize the Town Offices on a one time per week basis at \$40 per cleaning for the foreseeable future—moved by Maureen—all in favor.

Brief discussion followed regarding the possible need to clean and sanitize at the Meeting House before and after the June 10 school budget vote. Louise will touch base with Emily and report back.

### **Where to Meet Going Forward**

Maureen solicited ideas from Kord and Peter. All Selectboard members are happy with using Zoom for meetings. Brief discussion followed on whether to use the Meeting House once public meetings resume. Peter noted that the exit doors at the Meeting House pose a legal liability and the building should not be used for public meetings until the issue is resolved. Kord reported a conversation with Pete Newton about the salt shed which led to discussion on repairs needed at the Meeting House. The issue of the Meeting House doors came up and Pete told Kord that adjusting the doors to swing out is more involved for the entrance/exit doors. The school auditorium was suggested as an alternate meeting site. For the present time, it was agreed to continue with Zoom meetings.

### **Reconfiguring the Town Offices**

Maureen opened discussion on reconfiguring the Town Offices for the Treasurer, Asst. Treasurer and Auditors who currently use the meeting room as a work space. Peter noted that the current configuration does not provide a quiet, private work space for the Treasurer and he is in favor of reconfiguring. A suggestion was made to move the Treasurer to the Listers office, and have the Listers use the meeting room. Mike noted that the Listers office contains several heavy fireproof cabinets and a lot of files on zoning and current use. Mike also noted that when two meetings are scheduled for the same time, one group uses the Town Office meeting room and the other group meets at the Meeting House which does not have access to the copier, computer, scanner, etc. A suggestion was made to move the Listers to the upstairs office at the Meeting House which includes a big table and more space. This still presents a problem with access to paper files at the Town Office such as zoning files which currently exist only on paper and need to be accessible at the Town Office.

Mike noted that until all the records can be digitized, access to files remains a problem. Mike has been scanning land records received over the past year and a half but records received prior to that time exist only in paper form at present. Mike explained that NEMRC is the platform currently used by the Treasurer, the Delinquent Tax Collector, the Listers, and the Town Clerk. Maureen noted a new system will replace NEMRC in a few years and records will need to be transferred. Discussion was held on the long-term goal to digitize all records. Mike mentioned that legal-size records cannot be run through the auto-feed function on the scanner, making this work painstakingly slow for Town Office employees. Mike noted that commercial companies can do this work more efficiently, and that some towns have been able to secure grants to pay for it. Mike suggested getting a grant writer to look into grants for this purpose; Kathy Scott said Mary McCoy has experience with grants.

## **Tax Sale Properties**

Paul Wyman reported communication with the Clay family who expressed a desire to keep the property and intend to use funds from a legal settlement to pay the back taxes. Jessica Clay provided paperwork from an attorney showing an anticipated probate settlement of approximately \$10,000 which she agreed to remit to the Town. This would cover most of the debt but not enough to pay the debt in full. Paul stated his understanding that the regulations require payment in full. Taxes, penalties and interest come to \$11,162.56 but this does not include administrative fees and legal costs. Brief discussion followed on whether tax sale properties are included in the prohibition against evictions during the COVID crisis and other eviction-related concerns. Discussion followed on whether the Town can accept less than the total amount owed as full settlement. Maureen will discuss it with Atty. Bob Fisher. Paul noted additional concerns with the Town taking possession which should be considered before turning down the offer.

Kord suggested that the Selectboard visit the other properties which were included in the tax sale to determine whether to sell or acquire the properties for town use. Peter agreed to join Kord. When a date and time are determined, this will be posted as a meeting.

## **Old Business:**

### **Wi-fi Hotspot Update and Deerfield Valley Broadband CUD Update/vote to join**

Kord has not heard anything new re: the wi-fi booster at the Meeting House. Dave Cherry sent the By-laws for the Deerfield Valley Communication Union District to the Selectboard along with email exchanges from Steven John. Maureen noted that the Windham Regional Commission is suggesting all towns in the region join Deerfield Valley CUD which has already formed. The entire project was originally anticipated to be completed by July/August 2020. There is no cost or commitment on the Town's part. Maureen is in favor of joining. Kord asked about those residents currently getting high speed service through V-Tel's existing fiber optic lines. Maureen agreed with Peter that it is unlikely that existing fiber optic lines would be replaced. She volunteered to follow-up with Dave and report back.

### **Windham Traffic Ordinance**

Maureen reviewed changes to the draft Traffic Ordinance (attached) which she distributed prior to the meeting. Under Article 3, Section 1, she added the locations of 4 additional stop signs not included in the 1994 Ordinance. She suggested driving through Town to be sure all signs are listed. She included road names in addition to the numerical road references listed. Maureen feels letter (h) is confusing because Town Road #3 refers to Popple Dungeon on the list of highways she received from Mike, but it also refers to White Road and Hitchcock Hill Road. Kord noted that the State references roads by number but road names are used locally in discussions. As discussed previously, Maureen eliminated some sections which were obsolete and updated the speed limit in the school zone to 25 mph. Typos and grammar were also corrected as needed. Maureen asked for feedback on whether to eliminate Article 6, Section 3, letter (c) which prohibits parking of vehicles on Town highways from November 1 to November 1. Joyce related a near-accident last year due to a car parked partly in the road at Ed Brown's house. Kord recalled an incident involving a Town truck backing into a vehicle which was parked where it shouldn't have been. He noted that the Ordinance will need to be run by Atty. Fisher before it is formally adopted. Maureen will continue working on it for further review.

Kord asked Maureen and Peter for feedback on the email exchanges about the speed limit issue he forwarded prior to the meeting, noting that Jeff Nugent and Officer Lakin had different opinions on the effectiveness of reducing the speed limit. Maureen noted that Officer Lakin's opinion was based on a working knowledge and familiarity with the issue. Peter agreed with Kord's preference for consistency and maintaining a speed limit of 35 mph on Windham Hill Road except for the school zone (25 mph) and South Windham village (30 mph). Maureen also noted that the section of Windham Hill Road in Townshend is not substantially different from the section in Windham and agreed that the same speed limit of 35 mph should apply for most of Windham Hill Road in Windham (with the exception of the school zone and South Windham village). Kord will look into whether the Selectboard has the latitude to reduce the speed limit by 5 mph.

### **Nuisance Animal Ordinance**

Kord did not have a chance to review the sample ordinance Joyce typed which was based on the Putney ordinance. Joyce noted that Newfane's nuisance animal ordinance is very similar to Putney's. She also looked at animal ordinances for several other towns and included excerpts from those that might be useful. Maureen asked the members to review the sample ordinance for further discussion at upcoming meetings.

### **Town Office Floor Insulation Repair**

Kord reported that he is reconsidering the use of foam insulation in the radiant heat system at the Town Office. This project has been under consideration for some time. Farnum Insulators originally provided a quote for the work but Kord was hesitant to proceed due to possible health issues associated with the use of spray foam insulation. Farnum requoted the project including removal of the fiberglass, installation of a reflective material, batt insulation, and netting to hold it in place as a creative way to avoid using spray foam insulation; this option was more expensive. Kord is now reconsidering the approach and thinking that the use of spray foam insulation would be more cost-effective. Kord again asked Farnum to quote on the project using spray foam and hopes to have a quote by the next meeting so this can be completed before winter.

### **The Meeting House:**

#### **Front Door**

Kord noted he and Pete Newton reviewed the front door issue at the Meeting House. Kord suggested that the door handle/locking issue may be partly attributable to independent decisions on purchases made by volunteers over the years, noting that quality of materials was not always a primary consideration. Kord believes the door handle/locking issue may be addressed by adjusting the strike or latch. Pete noted that adjusting the front door to swing out presents a problem as it will hit the deck. The deck is being considered for replacement by something more historically appropriate, such as stone. Pete and Ed Brown will work on a conceptual drawing for stone steps at one door and a stone handicapped ramp at the other door. There is also discussion of fabricating new historically appropriate entrance doors.

Tom Johnson reported that he looked at the door and noted that the latch was falling out. Tom reattached the door latch mechanism with longer screws. It was working okay when he left the building. Kord asked Tom how much pressure the Fire Marshal was exerting on the ingress/egress issues. Tom is not aware of any written report as a result of the inspection; only verbal discussion. Brief discussion followed on an inspection of the building by PACIF to determine if the insured value was appropriate; this inspection has not yet occurred. Tom noted that repairs would be required immediately following the insurance inspection. Maureen thanked Tom for repairing the front door lock which worked fine for her earlier in the day.

#### **Smoke Detectors**

Kord reported that the smoke detectors were to have been replaced today by the alarm company technician. Kord updated Tom on the false alarm at the Meeting House two weeks ago and the issue with the door handle/lock, the need to replace the 3 smoke detectors which were the likely cause of the false alarm, and the need for new step-by-step instructions on how to silence the alarm to be posted at the alarm panel.

## **Insulation/Farnum quote**

The quote from Farnum Insulators (attached) for the Meeting House was discussed. The work was quoted in several parts.

Part 1 is the crawlspace beneath the building which is responsible for a “staggering” amount of cold air moving up into the building. Considerable amount of daylight is visible through the foundation. The solution includes installation of a 20 mil vapor barrier over the floor of the crawlspace and turning up the base of the perimeter foundation 6-12”, sealing all seams with seam tape, using mineral wool to chink the largest of the gaps in the stone foundation, spraying an average of 3” (R-22) closed cell foam along the sill and down the foundation to the vapor barrier, and painting the foam with fire-intumescent paint. The cost for Part 1 is \$11,557.

Part 2 is the attic which is vast and completely uninsulated. Also the perimeter walls (double walls with 12+” between interior and exterior) are open to the attic allowing convective heat loss from below. The solution is to install rigid foam blocking along the tops of the perimeter walls, spraying a 1” cap of closed cell foam over the backside of the plaster ceiling to provide an air seal and stabilize the plaster before insulating. An average of 16” of loose fill cellulose will be blown over the entire attic for a total R-value of 63. The cost for Part 2 is \$12,696.

The quote also noted additional insulation work necessary for the walls of the building which are open without compartmentalized bays. Without smaller volume areas, such as stud bays, insulating such large volumes is very difficult. Estimated cost ranges were provided for creating a band between the first floor ceiling and the sanctuary floor—approximately \$20,000, insulating the lower 14 feet (1<sup>st</sup> floor walls)—approximately \$25,000-\$30,000, and insulating the upper 12 feet (2<sup>nd</sup> floor walls)—approximately \$20,000-\$25,000.

Tom noted that the Meeting House Committee thought focusing on Part 1 would be most effective in reducing the air infiltration from below and reducing the rate of heat loss.

Kord suggested sharing the information in the quote with the Friends of the Meeting House to make them aware. Maureen asked about whether this would fall under the Friends or the Town. Kord noted that the Friends plan to address repairs to the siding and roof, and painting of the Meeting House. Brief discussion followed on the Friends 501(c)3 status which needs to be resolved in order to resume fundraising efforts. Discussion followed on pursuing grant funds. Kord offered to ask Mary McCoy if she would be interested in researching grant fund availability. Kord noted that keeping the Friends of the Meeting House involved and informed is important to the overall success of the Meeting House.

Brief discussion followed on whether the Meeting House Committee has any interest in holding a Zoom meeting which Maureen offered to assist with; Louise will consider this further. Discussion followed on whether a Go Fund Me campaign would be an option to support the Meeting House, the tag sale fundraiser planned for Memorial Day weekend which is on hold due to social distancing requirements, and the on-line platform helping local vendors to sell products this year at the WRCP Farmers Market.

## **Roads:**

### **Salt Shed Wall Repair Quote & Plans**

Following up on discussion held at the last meeting, Kord reported on a budget for all the expenses anticipated in the project. He estimates a total somewhere between \$20,000 and \$25,000 which includes the concrete work quoted by Record Concrete, excavation, footings, carpentry, access doors, and structural support repairs. Pete reviewed the gussets from the side walls to the trusses and feels they are in worse shape than anticipated. He has an idea on how to resolve the problem and feels it needs to be done as soon as possible.

Kord noted that Richard removed the remaining sand from the salt shed and found another crack on the far left inside corner, which will require an additional (5<sup>th</sup>) pilaster. Brief discussion followed on whether to consult a structural engineer or an architect. Kord is comfortable with Pete's building and renovation experience, Richard's excavation and general experience, and Charlie Record's reputation as a respected concrete contractor. Peter agreed that Pete, Richard and Charlie are more likely to utilize common sense. Kord noted that while they all believe this is the best approach, they don't want to feel responsible later if the repairs don't correct the problem. Kord also expressed a concern that a structural engineer may determine that the structure needs to be demolished and replaced with a new shed which would need to comply with current building codes at a much greater expense. Kord agreed to submit a more detailed written budget to be reviewed and finalized at the next meeting. Kord noted that Richard and Kurt are now expressing a greater sense of urgency to resolve the structural issues involving the roof and walls.

#### **VTrans Grant Applications**

Kord reported that the grant applications were all submitted but the State's financial position is very uncertain at present.

#### **550 Update**

Kord reiterated what was reported at the last meeting, namely that Richard went to the body company and worked with the shop foreman on the location for controls, the 4-5 week timeframe, etc.

#### **VOSHA COVID-19 Training-completed by deadline**

Maureen learned through Kord that the road crew completed the training as required.

#### **Roadside Mowing Contract Review/Sign**

Kord remarked that the other two contractors he was hoping to receive quotes from are not interested (M&M and Bruce Orchitt). He suggested biting the bullet and proceeding with JA Mitchell Contracting Services of Lyndonville who quoted \$11,485.20 (attached). Kathy sent an analysis of last year's costs that showed \$16,500 was spent last year on roadside mowing by renting equipment and paying Kurt to operate the rental equipment. Kord mentioned that the budgeted amount for roadside mowing is \$10,000 not including spot mowing for poisonous parsnip which he expects will need to be done again this year at an additional cost of \$1,500, bringing the total to approximately \$13,000. Kord recommended using JA Mitchell for roadside mowing this year; Weston, Andover and the State are happy with the service they receive.

Motion: To hire JA Mitchell Contracting Services to perform roadside mowing services as outlined in the bid submitted for a total cost of \$11,485.20—moved by Kord—all in favor.

Peter noted that contracting the roadside mowing out will free up Kurt and Richard to do their regular work. Kord will communicate with JA Mitchell re: the bid acceptance.

#### **Road Erosion Inventory Grant for Windham Regional Commission to do/Reimbursement Update**

Kord reported that he had hoped to use employee time and labor as part of the Town contribution towards the Road Erosion Inventory grant but Richard didn't need to spend any time on it as the work was done by an outside team. Kord will work with Kathy on filing for reimbursement.

### **Paving Plans**

Kord will circulate paving plan options to Maureen and Peter including cost-analysis information prepared by Everett. The information was already forwarded to Richard. Kord related that Rockingham did eliminate the Public Works Director's position from the most recent budget, and noted the potential loss to Windham.

### **Innovative Equipment and Chloride Agreement Review/Sign**

Kord reported that the initial 3-year agreement with Innovative Equipment has expired. Innovative provided the tanks for application of magnesium chloride to reduce dust on gravel roads at no cost provided we purchase 9000 gallons of liquid road treatment products from them. Magnesium chloride is not currently available and Innovative proposes to substitute calcium chloride at \$0.91 per gallon. Kord stated that the agreement submitted for signature (attached) is for the equipment only, not the calcium product. When the calcium product is ordered, Richard will need to include an erosion inhibitor additive before spraying if we use calcium chloride. Kord confirmed that the agreement presented for approval is just for the equipment (not the road treatment product) and the agreement needs to be signed by the end of the month.

Motion: To authorize Kord Scott to sign the equipment agreement with Innovative Surface Solutions—moved by Maureen—all in favor.

Kord was asked to keep the Selectboard members posted on the availability and pricing of the road treatment material (magnesium chloride vs. calcium chloride).

### **Payroll/Bills**

Maureen asked about the checks sent today which seemed to be the same as Gail sent last week and inquired re: payroll. Kathy explained that payroll was entered but that she did not include it in the information she sent. If the Selectboard were meeting in person, she would have presented the payroll information at the meeting.

Motion: To authorize Kord Scott to sign off on bills for this meeting—moved by Maureen—all in favor.

### **Adjournment**

Motion: To adjourn the Regular Selectboard meeting at 7:38 p.m.—moved by Peter—all in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Joyce Cumming  
Selectboard Clerk

### **Attachments:**

- Draft Windham Traffic Ordinance
- Insulation Quote for the Meeting House from Farnum Insulators
- Roadside Mowing Quote from JA Mitchell Contracting Services
- Equipment Agreement with Innovative Surface Solutions